

Bay Trail Rider

Spring 2006



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY TRAIL PROJECT, A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION ADMINISTERED BY THE ASSOCIATION OF BAY AREA GOVERNMENTS

Five-Year Grant Program Complete

In September, the Bay Trail Project reached a significant milestone with the completion of a 5-year competitive grant program. In partnership with the Coastal Conservancy, over **\$6.2 million from Proposition 12** was allocated to local jurisdictions and land managers to complete planning studies and trail construction projects related to the Bay Trail. Forty-five projects were funded through this program resulting in over 14 miles of trail construction, new shoreline destination areas, interpretive signs, trail amenities as well as detailed planning analysis for over 65 miles of proposed Bay Trail. In addition, the Bay Trail Gap Analysis was completed providing detailed information about the costs and timeframe to complete the 500-mile Bay Trail system. Local governments contributed over \$4.00 for every \$1.00 provided through the Bay Trail grant program, significantly broadening the effectiveness of this State money.

Twenty construction projects funded under this program resulted in numerous benefits to shoreline communities and the regional network. These benefits include **transportation options** to employment centers, as provided by the Damon Slough gap closure in Oakland and the Coyote Creek Trail in Milpitas. **New shoreline destinations** have been created including Shoreline Park in San Mateo, Union Point Park in Oakland, and the Port of San Francisco's Pier 14. Increased **waterfront recreation** opportunities are now in place along a section of trail in

San Rafael's Shoreline Park and along the edge of the Oakland Estuary north of Martin Luther King, Jr. Regional Shoreline.

Bay Trail improvements will provide increased **wildlife viewing opportunities** along a new boardwalk at Alviso Marina County Park and on the Harrier Spur Trail at the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge. Expansive **shoreline viewpoints** were created on Novato's Reservoir Hill Trail overlooking the Hamilton Wetlands Restoration Project and along a new trail above the Carquinez Strait at the Benicia State Recreation Area. The Bay Trail was incorporated into the design of a **new bridge** over the Napa River, a **tunnel** in Point Richmond and **on-street bicycle facilities** were constructed in West Oakland and along Cuttings Wharf Road in Napa County.

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San Mateo Shoreline Parks

On a sunny Saturday morning in June, over 1,000 people joined City of San Mateo staff, Park & Recreation Commissioners and Council Members at a **grand opening celebration of two new Shoreline Parks**: Ryder and Seal Point.

As the first phase of development for San Mateo's 177-acre Shoreline Parks vision, the creation of Ryder and Seal Point Parks transforms the City's waterfront into a regional destination area.

\$500,000 in grant funds from the Bay Trail Project helped to underwrite the new bicycle and pedestrian bridge over San Mateo Creek, improvements to the Bay Trail, a group picnic shelter, scores of play equipment, a restroom building, parking area, three-acre dog park, and windsurf and sea kayak launch. This transformation brings enhanced environmental quality and community opportunities to explore and enjoy the Bay shoreline.



The new bicycle and pedestrian bridge at San Mateo Creek

Union Point Park

Through the efforts of a broad public-private partnership, **Union Point Park** was completed this summer along Oakland's waterfront. Located just south of Coast Guard Island between Embarcadero and the Oakland Estuary, Union Point Park is the realiza-



Celebrating the opening of Union Point Park

tion of an eight-year vision to transform the Oakland shoreline and create a premiere waterfront park in this historically industrial area. A ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new park was held on September 10, 2005.

The 7-acre park opens up 1,500 feet of waterfront for Bay Area residents and visitors to enjoy. The park offers a variety of amenities and artwork including an extensive trail system that is a part of the Bay Trail, a children's playground, picnic areas with barbeque pits, grassy fields, a community circle, and a spiraling hill that provides views of the Oakland Estuary, Bay Bridge and the San Francisco skyline. Union Point Park is truly a shining example of what can be accomplished through community participation and collaboration. Many organizations contributed valuable expertise and resources towards the creation of this wonderful park including a \$500,000 grant from the Bay Trail Project.

Napa's Maxwell Bridge

In 2002, the Bay Trail Project provided \$300,000 to the City of Napa as contribution toward the construction of bicycle and pedestrian facilities on the new Maxwell Bridge over the Napa River. The bike lane and sidewalk on the north span are complete and are already heavily used. Bicycle and pedestrian

facilities on the southern span will be constructed using other funding sources, and is anticipated to be complete in early 2006. Once the Napa River Flood Control Project is complete, the bridge path will connect to the City of Napa's Kennedy Park and 4.5 miles of existing Bay Trail.

San Francisco Bay Trail Gap Analysis Study

After a lengthy and concerted effort by GreenInfo Network, Alta Planning + Design and Bay Trail staff past and present, the Bay Trail Gap Analysis Study is complete and available on our website (www.baytrail.org). The purpose of the study was to answer the two most commonly asked questions raised by decision-makers regarding the Bay Trail: **When will it be complete, and how much will it cost?** **Answers: 2020 & \$188,000,000.** The geodatabase and geographic information system (GIS) created as background for the study provides staff with details on every gap in the Bay Trail system, and includes such information as: lead agency, proposed trail type and surface, obstacles to implementation, cost for construction, design and permitting, and estimated completion timeline.

New \$3.8 Million Grant Program Underway

The San Francisco Bay Trail Project announces the launch of a **\$3.8 million dollar grant program** to complete undeveloped segments of the 500-mile Bay Trail. In partnership with the State Coastal Conservancy, the Bay Trail Project is currently soliciting applications for trail planning and construction projects. The funding is available from Proposition 40 for projects that complete Bay Trail gaps, provide strong leverage with local contributions, demonstrate partnerships, and encourage creative solutions. Projects must be complete by June 30, 2010. Applications will be accepted until the full grant is allocated. For more information and to download a copy of the application visit our web site at: **www.baytrail.org**.

Remembering Bill Bliss

The Bay Trail Project recently lost a dear friend and dedicated board member. In June, **Bill Bliss** was killed in a tragic bicycle accident in the mountains of Colorado while on a cross-country ride. Bill was an energetic supporter and pioneer of the Bay Trail Project, serving as a member of the original Advisory Board that developed the plan and as Bay Trail Board chair from 1994-1999. He will be greatly missed.

Bay Trail Board Chair Rick Parmer remembers, "Bill was a professional colleague and friend with an unselfish passion for improving the lot of bicyclists and trail users in the San Francisco Bay Area and California through his two-fold involvement in the Bay Trail Project and the California State Recreation Trails Committee. His leadership in the Bay Trail project can be measured by the miles of safe biking trails he helped champion through his years as chair of the Steering



Bill Bliss

Committee. His selfless legacy will forever be reflected in the experiences of families and individuals recreating on the Bay Trail. Those users will never know the pioneering safe bicycling advocate with the elegant handwritten fountain pen notes of many a Bay Trail Steering Committee meeting. Yet, they will benefit from his work each time they venture forth on the Bay Trail."

The Bliss family asked that donations be made to the Bay Trail Project in his name and an outpouring of donations have been received.

Bay Trail Project staff is working with the Bliss family to create a memorial in honor of his leadership, enthusiasm and dedication to the Bay Trail.



Bill Bliss on a cross-country ride with his daughters in 1976.

The Bay Trail Has a New Logo!

The San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) recently hired Hunt Design of Pasadena, California to update their shoreline signage and to develop a

design guideline booklet for permit applicants. The Bay Trail Project was graciously included in the scope of the project, and a fresh, updated new logo is the happy result. While the current logo was still serviceable, the new one does a better job of "telling the story" of the Bay Trail—a pathway along the shoreline, versus to the shoreline. The overall color scheme has remained the same in order to preserve visual continuity in the field, however, the words "Bay Trail" are much more distinct and easy to recognize. The new signs will gradually be introduced as local jurisdictions complete Bay Trail segments and implement their signage programs. Existing signage in the field will be replaced with the new signs as needed over time. Look for the new logo in your town by Spring 2006!



Grant Program cont. from page 1

Eighteen focused planning studies take Bay Trail segments one step closer to completion. Detailed feasibility studies identified preferred alignments in Sonoma County, Richmond, Menlo Park, El Cerrito, Oakland and Alameda. The grant program funded construction design for trails in the Presidio, through San Mateo County's Coyote Point Park and for a bridge across the San Leandro Slough. A detailed engineering analysis was completed for the trail corridor along Carquinez Scenic Drive in Contra Costa County.

Seven special projects were also funded under this program including, the regional gap analysis (for more details on this report see page 2), the Birding the Bay Trail brochure, new Bay Trail maps, Bay Trail signs, a supplement in Bay Nature magazine published in October 2003, second year research for the Wildlife and Public Access Study and contribution to the television documentary "Saving the Bay."

The Bay Trail Project would like to thank the Coastal Conservancy, all the grantees, and the numerous partner agencies and supporting organizations that made this grant program a success.

Hamilton Army Airfield is Reborn

In 2001, the Bay Trail Project provided the City of Novato with a \$431,250 grant for construction of the 3,800 foot **Reservoir Hill Trail** and associated parking lot, benches, kiosks, signage, and landscaping. In addition to being a welcome and well-used destination in this new neighborhood, this recently completed trail segment provides an amazing opportunity to witness first-hand the development of the Hamilton Wetlands Restoration Project (HWRP) which will restore approximately 650 acres of former military airfield to tidal and seasonal wetlands.

According to the HWRP Draft Public Access Plan, "The goal of the project is to create a diverse array of wetlands and wildlife habitats that will benefit a number of endangered species as well as other migratory and resident species..." The combination of the Hamilton project and the proposed restoration of the



Bay Trail Board Member, Rosemary Corbin, scopes out the Hamilton project.

neighboring Bel Marin Keys Unit V and State Lands Commission parcels to the north will result in 4.3 new miles of continuous shoreline trail serving Novato, San Rafael, Hamilton Field, and greater Marin County.

Given the challenges presented by incorporating 2.66 miles of Bay Trail into an area with existing endangered clapper rail habitat, the HWRP team found creative design solutions to address these concerns, while still keeping in mind the goal of an aesthetically pleasing Bay Trail experience. The success

of such innovative design solutions are of paramount importance to the Bay Trail, especially as other large-scale restoration efforts move forward around the Bay. Though it will be several years before the trail is complete and wetland plants and animals flourish, local residents and visitors alike will benefit from such an expansive vista from which to watch a decommissioned airfield revert to nature.

New *Birding the Bay Trail* Brochure Takes Flight

A new resource for Bay Area birders is now available from the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory (SFBBO). The ***Birding the Bay Trail* brochure**



includes a map of the Bay Trail identifying sixteen birding sites along the edge of San Francisco Bay. Birders on the Bay Trail will have the chance to explore various scenic areas and the opportunity to see over 280 shorebird species. The publication includes directions, descriptions of site accessibility and a list of likely bird sightings. All the locations are wheelchair accessible, and many offer amenities such as visitor centers, restrooms, benches and picnic areas.

The *Birding the Bay Trail* brochure offers great opportunities for people to spend time in nature and discover areas that they never knew existed.

The brochure is available to download from the Bay Trail website at www.baytrail.org.

ABAG Tees Up for the Bay Trail

ABAG held its **16th Annual Service Program Golf Tournament** on July 29, at the Metropolitan Golf Links in Oakland. The tournament took place adjacent to on-going Bay Trail construction projects in San Leandro and Oakland. Proceeds in the amount of \$3,000 were donated to the Bay Trail Project.

The Bay Trail wishes to express our gratitude to:

The Port of Oakland; PG&E; AIG Valic; Windermere; Bank of New York Trust Co.; Bickmore Risk Services; Brookfield Homes; C.V. Starr & Co.; Driver Alliant Insurance Services; Ideal Restorative Drying; Jones Hall; Kelling, Northcross & Nobriga; Maze and Associates; Meyers Nave; Selman Breitman, LLP; ServiceMaster Clean; Stone & Youngberg LLC; Union Bank of California



Along the Bay Trail

ALAMEDA

The City of Oakland recently closed an important Bay Trail gap in the West Oakland neighborhood with the completion of 3 miles of pathways, sidewalks, and bike lanes extending from Jack London Square to the Emeryville border. The **West Oakland Bay Trail** gap closure is the result of three distinct projects: 2nd and 3rd Streets (funded in part through a \$250,000 Bay Trail grant), the 3rd Street extension, and Mandela Parkway. Along this corridor, the City has placed 5 historic markers highlighting significant events and milestones in Oakland's past. Each marker has a separate theme, including waterfront industry, transportation, and the changing shoreline.

SANTA CLARA

On September 24, 2005, the Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department celebrated the completion of a half-mile of the Bay Trail, a new boardwalk, and viewing platforms within **Alviso Marina County Park**. Funded in part through a \$150,000 Bay Trail grant, the project also includes new trailhead signs, maps, and benches. The boardwalk along the edge of the former marina basin provides unique opportunities for environmental and historic education. The park is listed in the *Birding the Bay Trail* brochure as an exceptional bird watching site.

In partnership with the Santa Clara Valley Water District, the City of Milpitas constructed 2.75 miles of Bay Trail along levees adjacent to Coyote Creek between Dixon Landing Road and Highway 237. The project received a \$391,000 grant from the Bay Trail Project. The **Coyote Creek Trail** provides a new bicycle and pedestrian connection to the McCarthy Ranch retail center and serves as an alternative transportation corridor for employees of nearby high-tech industries.

MARIN

In 2002, the Bay Trail Project awarded a \$125,080 grant to the City of San Rafael for construction of the **South Pond Segment in Shoreline Park**. Working in concert with other funding sources such as the Marin Conservation League and the California Department of Park and Recreation's Recreational Trails Program, this project added 1,320 linear feet to the Bay Trail, resulting in a one-mile continuous segment of Bay Trail adjacent to the water. The South Pond Project includes attractive benches, landscaping, and birdwatching opportunities. To visit this site, turn onto Grange from East Francisco Boulevard, then turn right onto Kerner and park on the street.

SONOMA

In 2001, the Sonoma County Regional Parks received a \$35,000 Bay Trail grant to prepare the **Sonoma County Bay Trail Corridor Plan**. Due to the historic lack of public land ownership along the northern shoreline, the alignment in Sonoma County has been primarily located on Highways 12, 37, 121, and 116. Since the late 1980's, numerous changes in property ownership have occurred creating new opportunities to improve the safety and quality of the designated Bay Trail in the rural North Bay. Regional Parks and Bay Trail staff continue to work together to implement the findings of this important study.

The Sonoma Land Trust is working on a conceptual plan for the **Sears Point Restoration Project** that includes up to 2.5 miles of new Bay Trail. This new segment will connect to the neighboring 1.5 mile **Sonoma Baylands Bay**

Trail segment that is currently under construction.

The transformation of this area of the North Bay through these two projects alone is significant, and was hardly imaginable when the original Bay Trail alignment was adopted in 1987. It is our hope that future restoration efforts in this region continue to provide opportunities for moving the Bay Trail closer to the shoreline and off of State highways.



Sonoma Baylands site with the Sears Point Restoration Project in background

SOLANO

Caltrans recently completed a major component of the Highway 37 Improvements Project in the **White Slough** area of Vallejo. An important aspect of this project for the Bay Trail was the inclusion of a 1.25-mile Class I bicycle and pedestrian path between Sacramento Street and Enterprise Drive. This new segment provides an important connection to an existing pathway along Vallejo's waterfront, and to the Vallejo Ferry service.

CONTRA COSTA

In partnership with the City of Richmond, the Bay Trail Project funded improvements that doubled the width of the existing pedestrian path in **Ferry Point Tunnel** to 8-foot wide in order to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists. The improved path through the tunnel is a part of the Bay Trail system, and it provides a connection between Point Richmond and Brickyard Cove as well as access to Miller/Knox Regional Shoreline.

New Bay Trail Staff

In the past year, the Bay Trail Project welcomed **Patrycja Bossak** and **Lee Chien Huo** to its staff. Patrycja joins us from the San Francisco Estuary Project where she worked with the San Francisco Regional Water Quality Control Board on updating the San Francisco Basin Bay Plan. Prior to her Water Board responsibilities, Patrycja worked for the Coastal Conservancy as a Project Manager for the San Francisco Bay Region. Lee joins the Bay Trail staff with a broad range of professional experience in shoreline public access and trails, open space advocacy, land-use planning, and air quality. He has worked for several local organizations including the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, Greenbelt Alliance, the City of El Cerrito, and Contra Costa County.

Federal Funding for Bay Trail Projects

The Bay Trail Project is pleased to announce that the "Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users" (TEA-LU) recently passed by Congress and signed by the President includes **\$3.2 Million** in earmarks requested by the Bay Trail Project. These earmarks will help fund the development of four important Bay Trail projects:

- Connecting Bay Trail to the Millbrae Intermodal BART Station
- Guadalupe Slough Bay Trail Crossing at Alviso in the City of San Jose
- Connecting Bay Trail to the Oakland Coliseum BART Station
- San Leandro Slough Bay Trail Crossing in the City of San Leandro

In addition to the earmarks requested by the Bay Trail Project, several Bay Area jurisdictions have also obtained earmarks under TEA-LU for development of other portions of the Bay Trail including American Canyon, Belmont, Contra Costa County, Marin County, and the Presidio/Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

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BAY TRAIL RIDER, the newsletter of the San Francisco Bay Trail Project, highlights the progress and development of the Bay Trail. For more information about the Bay Trail, visit our website or call, write or e-mail us.



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